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NOTES AND DISCUSSION.

THE DISRAELI FAMILY.

THE ancestors of Lord Beaconsfield settled in Venice at about the beginning of the sixteenth century, and it will be interesting to publish three epitaphs of members of the Disraeli family who died in that city two centuries and a half ago.

These epitaphs are taken from the same MS. from which I have already extracted the two hundred inscriptions published in my book *לחות אבנים*.

The first of the three now given dates from the year 1631, and refers to a Leone Israeli. The second and third are the epitaphs of Esther and her husband Jacob Israeli, who died in 1632 and 1642 respectively. In order to be buried near his wife, Jacob Israeli had erected his tombstone during his life-time, and the date of his death was subsequently added. The two-fold epitaph is a memorial of his love for his wife, "the ornament of her husband," with whom he wishes to be united again in death.

עלה ארִיָה זה מסבכו
עלה מרום לפני לפני
עלה חכם קצין וראש
אומר אל אל אשה עיני
נכבד נחמד ויפה רואי
פנים עמדו על הר סיני
קול קורו בשנת צ"א צא
ממחילתך אל נן עדני
ראשון לשבט עלה להיות
ישראל נישע בה¹

¹ I have added a free translation of this epitaph. It is impossible to preserve the plays upon words which occur in the original. I have also omitted the dates.

'The "Lion" has gone from his forest,
He has risen to God in the sky.
A sage, a chief, he has risen,
"Unto God I lift up mine eye."
Honoured, beloved, fair to look upon,
Like to Moses on Sinai.

מרת אסתר אשת-			כה"ר יעקב ישראל יצ"ו.		
נפטרה טבת ה'ש"צג			נפטר יום א' כ"א חשוון ה'ת"נ.		
אשה	פאר איישה	שמו מנגד	נפש	הדר בעלה	קשורה בה
טמה	והיא אסתר	יפה שוכבת :	ה"ר י- יעקב יצ"ו	כמו שלהבת :	
ממ-	שפחות רמות	בישראל	היו	בני אחים	ונאהבים
אמנה	אחותו היא	ולו אוהבת :	על כן	עלי מותה	מאד נעצבת :
הודה	ותפארתה	לאין מספר	מקום	לגופתו	בעודו חי
ובער	נדיבותה	בכך נחשבת :	הכין	היות אצלה	הלום נקרכת :
יום ז"ך	לחדש אב	שנת ש"ח	העת	אשר יגזור	אלקים בו
באה	לעולם זה	ובו נצבת :	הבא	לבן אדם	בלי מחשבת :
נשאת	שנת ש"פא	וב' ט"בת	אז י-	היו שנית	אחדים פה
צ"ג ע-	לתה נפשה	ברום לשבת :	אדמת	בשרם עוד	הכי מורכבת :

A. BERLINER.

The Pronunciation of the Letter AYN (y).

No doubt exists among Oriental philologists as to the correct pronunciation of the letter *Ayn*, so that little that is new can be said on the subject. The aim of the following remarks is, therefore, chiefly to show how it should *not* be pronounced. Although the letter is one of the principal characteristics of the Semitic languages, the habit of articulating it falsely is very widely diffused. Many Jews in foreign countries, it is true, fancy they pronounce most grammatically if they speak it through the nose, but it is not taught so in the schools, whilst in this country, in Holland, and perhaps elsewhere, the nasal articulation of the *y* occupies the rank of a doctrine.

It is, however, necessary to introduce this little research *in absurdum* by a brief statement about the nature of this consonant ; and here it is sufficient to say that it belongs to the class of the *gutturals*, and is produced by a strong compression of the throat, accompanied by expulsion of the breath.

For non-Semitic individuals the pronunciation of this guttural sound is rather difficult, as they are inclined to relax the pressure of

Cried a voice : Thy lair now leaving.
 To My Garden in heaven come nigh.
 "Israel" arose at this bidding,
 To be saved by the Lord on high.'

I. A.